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Pelous Remittals Fund

Paid March 22<sup>d</sup> 1824

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An  
Inaugural Dissertation  
on the  
Bilious Remittent Fever.

As it appeared along the Banks of Schuylkill, and  
in the Great Valley of Chester County, Penna. in the  
Summer and Autumns of 1822 & 1823.

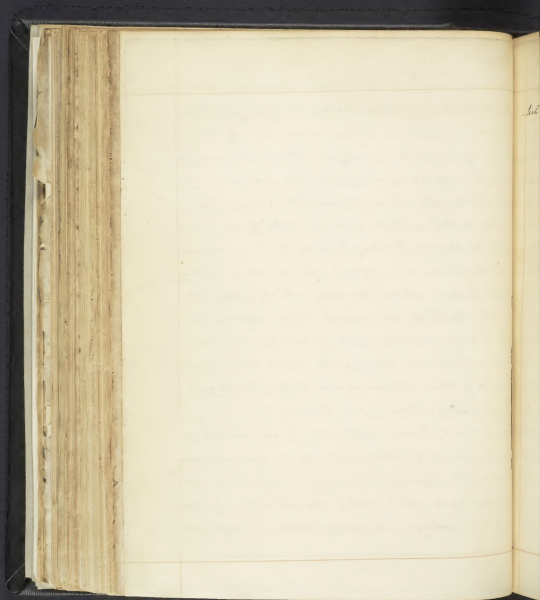
By  
Charles Wayne A. M.  
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Pennsylvania.

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## Introduction

A probationary thesis being necessary to obtain a degree in medicine, I have attempted in the following pages to investigate the cause and progress, the symptoms, character & treatment of the late Epidemic, which prevailed along the Banks of Schuylkill, and in the Great Valley of Chester County, Pennsylvania as it is incumbent on those who profess the means of making observations on those diseases, which prevail in the districts in which they reside, to collect and describe with fidelity all the facts which are connected with it, and particularly those which have lately ravaged the fairest portions of our Country?

Therefore all I will attempt to lay before you is, the result of observation made on the same disease at different times and in different situations, and which is the only correct way of acquiring a knowledge of its cause & nature, so as to deter-



ask a proper mode of treatment

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### *History of the Epidemic &c.*

Amongst the earliest cultivators of medical science, certain states & conditions of the Atmosphere were ascribed as powerfully influencing the causes of the production of diseases.

It was mentioned by Hippocrates the "Faster of cold-  
sine" to depend on the natural & known causes  
of change of air, he also speaks of a "divine prin-  
ciple" (Τὸ θεῖον) to be the cause of pious:

In a similar manner Dimebrock mentions the  
"Seminarium & celo dimissum" to be the cause  
of the same diseases.

And the illustrious Sydenham also ascribes this  
peculiar constitution of the Atmosphere, to exhalations arising from the bowels of the earth, for in  
describing one of the Epidemics in London he  
says "That the changes of the constitution depend  
principally, on some secret & hidden alteration  
in the bowels of the earth, communicated to  
the whole Atmosphere."



*[Faint, illegible handwriting visible through the paper, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text appears to be organized into columns, possibly a ledger or account book.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting visible on the right edge of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*

Such appears to sum up the opinion of our Doctors  
in Medicine, concerning the production of pestilence.  
But let us advance into the present age of medi-  
cal science, and we will find that certain states  
of the Atmosphere termed, "Constitutions," are said  
to produce certain classes of fever, which are  
vegetable putrefactions termed miasmata.  
That these arise from vegetable exhalations,  
can be clearly shown from the observations made  
on the Epidemic.

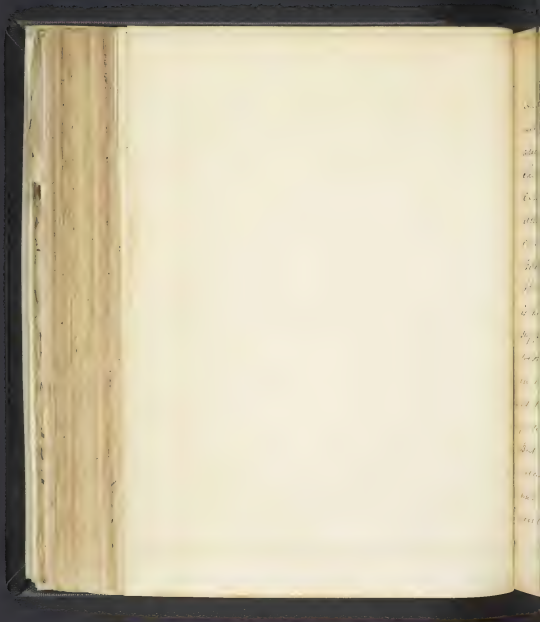
During the summer and Autumn of 1842, on  
the waters of the Schuylkill were unaccountably long  
a large number of logs and stumps which were  
formerly covered by the bed of the river, were now  
exposed to the action of the sun.  
We all know that wood decaying around water  
in a very time, but as soon as it is ex-  
posed to the sun it decays much faster.

Below the dam, a large number of the a baritone



journal in which a great quantity of vegetation  
had been collected & being exposed to the sun's rays  
and a beam necessary in producing microscopical  
beside these a number of swamps in the vicinity of  
Tahayide became perfectly dry  
from the drought, which even moved early in the  
Summer being covered with a luxuriant growth  
of high & thick grass, which died in the latter end  
of Summer and being trampled in the mud  
by the cattle exposed to the sun, affords another  
proof that microscopical is formed in this way.

During the continuance of the drought the water  
of the inhabitants after some time for want  
of rain were impounded, under this there was  
a quantity of water. In the charge of people in the  
matter of the water, in the summer of this there  
thought was greatly diminished. The system  
of water to make the action of water in the  
and in the vicinity of the water



194. I saw many more accounts than victims, and  
with symptoms more varying. There were  
also here a three months practice, and amongst  
children in this neighbourhood.

Examinations have widely contaminated the whole  
theory, there, a current over a great extent of  
country, by the winds from the sea, to produce  
fever, and intermittent fevers.

The pernicious nature of miasmata  
is not very well understood. By some it is  
supposed to be composed of the decomposed  
with Putridum & Carum, and some of the  
in unknown, supposing by others it is supposed  
to consist of some malice, and some of the  
putrefaction & animal matter in the matter.  
But all are one in one edge, that we can  
claim is, that it is a matter which is  
more poisonous, that it is very poisonous &  
particularly during rain, and during the day.



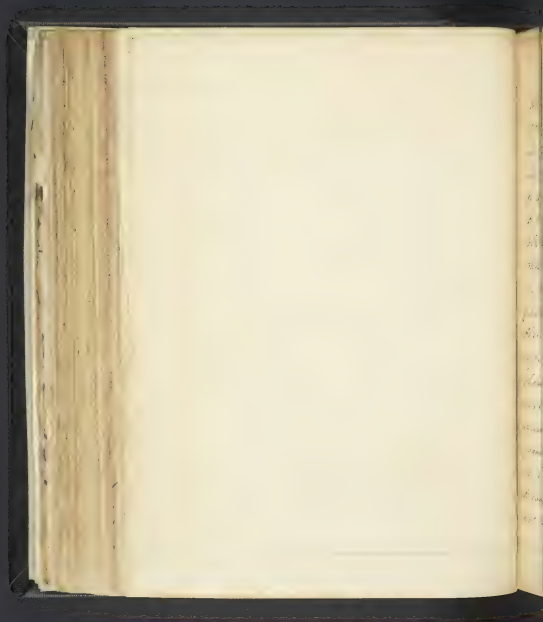


that it is in general the system is with much  
prevalence.

The epidemic made its appearance about the first  
of August along the banks of Schuykill, extending  
several miles below Harrisburg, as far up as two  
hundred miles, in the neighbourhood of the Valley  
Forge, on the Southern side of the Great Valley,  
being the first and worst of Schuykill attacking  
about the same time.

There were also, a few cases in the Valley.

It is well known how the inhabitants of mountain  
districts are disposed of retaining sickness for  
a great length of time without considering it as yet  
when the epidemic first would have been prevalent  
if we by accident there existing cases were  
unmarked that some persons must have been  
with the epidemic as well without being attacked,  
and been being exposed to some existing cases  
might be introduced.



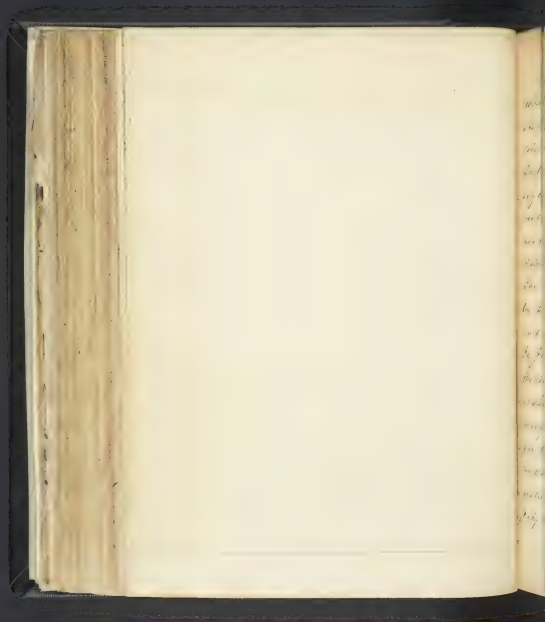
Thus we see, the general constitution of the  
atmosphere, man has no power, & that his place  
in the preservation of himself & others, is to be  
in such a position, as to be able to retreat  
to a distant region.

It was assumed that the change of air and  
the increase of humidity, & the increase  
there, & the exposure of themselves by rising  
in the night air, in the form of smoke, were  
particularly liable to an attack.

There were also different dispositions with  
regard to the same, for dispositions to being  
them into action, & these were night watchings,  
sentries, &c.

And the liability to an attack was in a  
great many instances, brought into action by  
the influence of an ancient Spirit.

It was remarked that those, & many more, were  
not attacked with this power, - had Deputies,



which generally yielded to the same treatment.

As it is mentioned by the highest authorities that winds blowing in a certain direction, at certain seasons combined are capable of producing certain epidemic constitutions, I will just add to mention the meteorological observations made on the young Gen. William Harris in the hotel where the disease prevailed.

The Spring of 1822 was generally dry & backward we had very little rain in March, April and May, and generally wind dry.

In June the season proved more moist.

The crops of grain &c. the harvest was left when it

at this year, than it has been known for

many years; In this month I commenced to

grow to forward along Tokuy's hill & amongst the

hillman at the valley, &c.; for many tem-

perature was, 18°

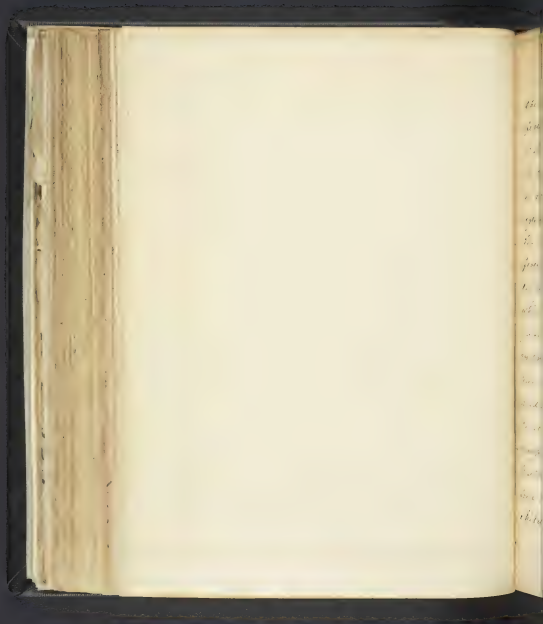
July was generally warm and dry, the thermom-



mercury stood at 86° on the 11th, & at 88° on the  
12th, it rained on the 13th day, which  
month, the Remission of the disease appears  
since this month, Cholera, Dysentery & Intermittents  
also prevailed, There was a fog always seen  
in the rich low land of the Valley, & along  
along Schuykill every morning, which mists  
formed in the middle of the day. The wind  
generally blowing from the S. the mean tempe-  
rature 82°.

August was warm and dry, the thermometer  
stood at 88° on the 1st, & at 89° on the 2nd day.  
The wind still continuing in the N. E. After  
three days this month, mean temperature 81°. Various  
fog still prevailing.

September was warm & dry, the mean temperature  
in this month, the mean temp, 80°. The wind  
in this month changed in the first time from the  
N. E. to S. W. - in a few days several families in





the body, were attacked with the prevailing  
fever.

It had been proved to make a good remedy  
in several treatments of St. Elizabeth's,  
in cases of persons who were from this fever, all  
eyes & both sides were attacked.

The symptoms which generally introduced this  
fever were languor, heaviness, inclination to  
sweat, frequent yawning & stretching, is now  
which runs up the back, & along the extremities  
from the lower limbs, & respiration difficult, which  
continued in some cases three hours, during which  
time the patient was, almost, & at last, was an  
dead, such & kind.

In some cases the patients were attacked with a  
kind of a head-ache, mixed to an upright  
position, & a very immediate fever, and, and  
some were attended with convulsions, particularly  
children.



and on the evening of the 10th the patient  
died. Cause: death.

The day in the back was very warm, and the  
patient could not lie in bed.

The patient was very much distressed, and  
suffering from a very severe, accompanied  
with a disagreeable taste in the mouth, the tongue  
was covered with a yellow fur. The eyes became  
sallow. The respiration felt easy. The pulse  
full & quick though never hard, there was also  
great tenderness about the epigastric region.

A great thirst & dry skin always attended this  
fever. The urine was highly colored & in its usual  
at present.

These symptoms generally continued from four  
to eight hours, which were succeeded by a sleep  
of skin & a profuse moisture over the whole sur-  
face.

In a number of cases a rash appeared on the third



By fourth day coming, the white or pink gen-  
-erally faded off the thro sampling.

There were generally some signs of this more severe  
- involving a swelling - the excreting some times  
- at even this stage - there were sometimes several  
- exacerbations in the same day.

When this fever did not terminate on the third or  
- fourth day it assumed a typhus character, which  
- was on sometimes to the sixth or seventh day  
- and which was generally more in the latter  
- afternoon a day, smooth & glossy of face, and  
- after was covered by a dark brown canal.

The purgings in this stage with some were  
- however attended with delirium, which lasted  
- in six a night hours, when there shewed with a  
- sweat which diffused over the whole body.

There were generally a cold & disagreeable of the system  
- himself to the original exciting cause.

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I must now detail the method, pursued in the treatment of this fever.

Could be ascertained, this was our first attention, was to cleanse the alimentary canal, and Dr. Ferrius has joined to us that our first remedy should be an emetic, unless it be taken on an advanced state of pregnancy, or a habitual predisposition to vomit blood: there was always a great accumulation of bile & other acrimonious matter which aggravated every symptom.

Sometimes the disease was removed entirely by giving an Emetic in the forming stage: In all cases where there was much nausea, purges had no good effect, for they were generally rejected; but in all cases where the Emetic was given, it never failed to throw up a great quantity of bile which generally relieved the patient very much of all his symptoms, particularly the pain in the head, which in some cases was very distressing: It also



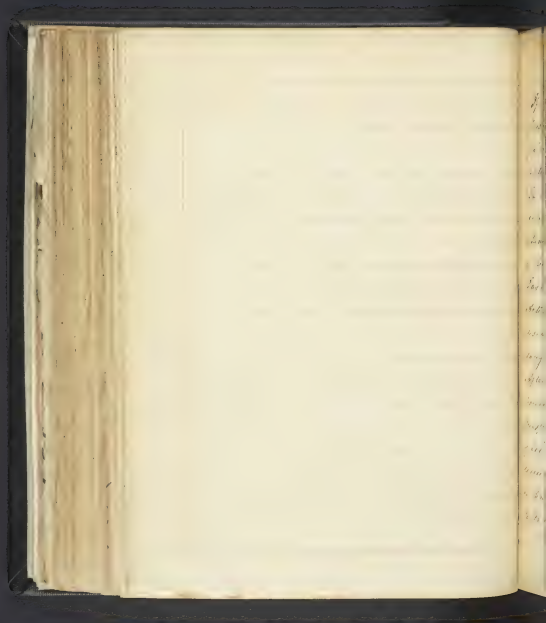


Produced a determination to the surgeon to remove  
the constriction to the extreme degree which seemed to  
be very beneficial.

As the stomach the chief seat of the disease, has  
a strong sympathy with the whole system its  
character was widely diffused, which being  
completely cleansed produced an amendment, or  
a more distinct remission than was before.

It appeared now of great service when nothing was  
thrown up beside the emetic itself & the water,  
Five grains of Emetic tartar was put in four tab-  
le spoonsfuls of water, one of which was given &  
gradually soon built home until it was almost  
operating, then the Emetic was thrown aside  
and the vomiting promoted by drinking very  
plentifully of warm water.

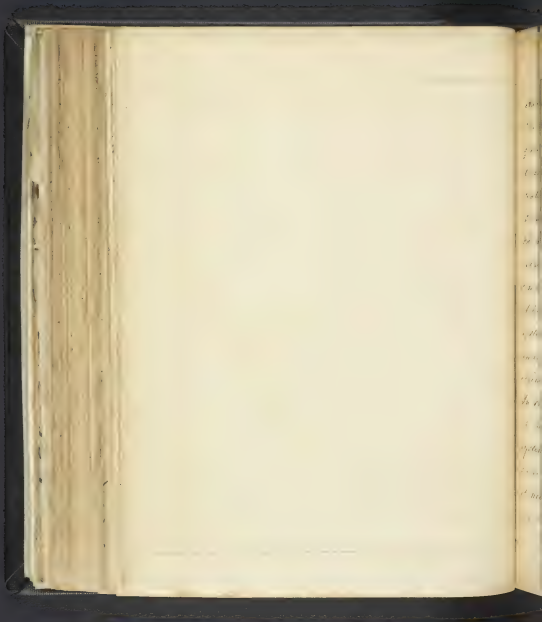
Exhibited in this manner I generally procured less  
vomiting and less pain & effectually in curing the  
whole alimentary canal of its morbid local.



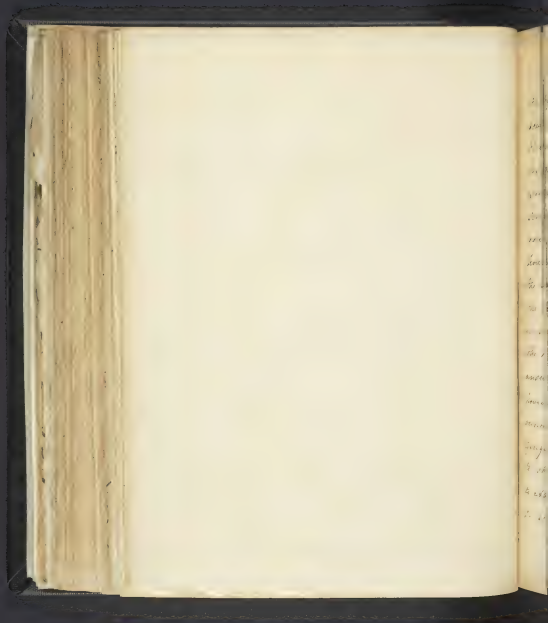
If the patient failed to open the bowels, & generally  
insistent purges of Calomel and Jalap which were  
directed to bring away much stool & a high bilious  
saliva, which attended great injury to the patient.  
In some cases violent vomiting was thought to be  
indispensable, & when there was progress against  
them, the bile was discharged entirely by purges  
of this kind, & afterwards kept the bowels open by  
Elixation & Laxatives.

Before evacuations given in the last stage of this  
disease always produced a return of the fever, & in  
dissipated the life of the patient.

After evacuating the contents of the stomach &  
bowels, the next indication was to excite a general  
perspiration, for this purpose was used, small doses  
of spirits, calomel and tartar emetic, which after  
relaxing arterial action, and relaxing the vessels  
in kind the desired effect of increasing the transpiration  
to be achieved. In some cases it kept the bowels open,







Since no other location, the water, for in  
some cases it was given to the animal of course.  
Three ounces without the sugar was good & fresh  
the milk & sometimes the thickness was to  
give a tea-spoon more tea. These doses in  
some cases were given, until the people were  
well, then the bark was given, as it is  
usually increasing strength, at the next intermission.  
The bark was resumed, continuing so until  
the same termination entirely. When the bark  
in substance could not be retained, I prescribed  
the bark tea as it was called, & in most cases  
answered very well, it was generally made by  
pouring a pint of boiling water on a half an  
ounce of the best red bark, to which cloves &  
ginger was added to make it more agreeable  
to the stomach, & when scapful was given  
to adults every hour during the intermission.  
In some cases the same was repeated in every four





By the mouth. - Here Eresma of bark proved suc-  
cessful. - I principally relied on this mode of treat-  
ment in cases of Chelidonium.

In the Epilepsia of 1828 I used it very much of  
Quinine in obstinate cases with great success and  
it will be found to be an extraordinary means in  
the treatment of its very kind. - The most violent  
vomits & being so easily taken & making so  
much stronger impression upon the stomach with  
a smaller quantity.

I generally, ascertained its containing some  
grain of bark, one of which was given so as to be  
very near, and I found that ten pills were suf-  
ficient to arrest the vomiting.

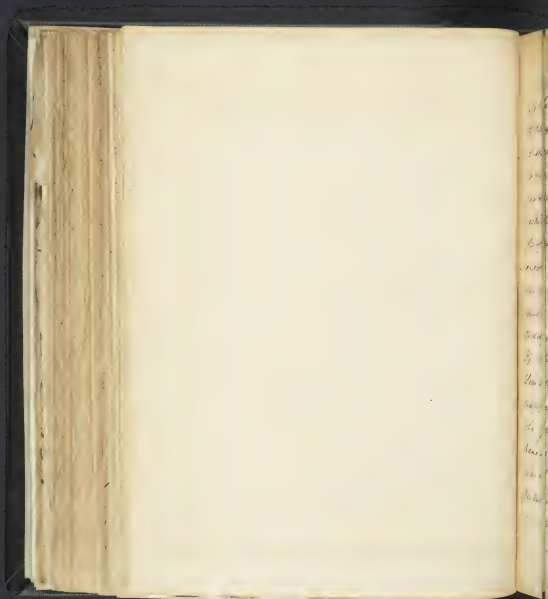
The Oxydized Iron Quinine was very much used  
by some physicians, as a substitute for the Peruvian  
Bark, - it may be justly ranked one of the best  
series of our remedies, in some cases it is more  
successful than the Cinchona, so yet I believe



the other as there has been issued in the United States to answer the same use of Conclusions is well as the Census List etc.

It generally presents best if on the line can record with the back of the foot of the Census Tables in the common landscape of our country in the following answers - I understand 3 is of the Layer on back 34 of the foot of Tables as to put in two groups of letters which seem to be groups and a line graph just was given every five or three hours,

1) The four continents beyond of which is each day, I always had recourse to statistics, now were extremely adapted to the present, presented a most excellent effect, if I am further to be known an intermission, the more were explained to the world - almost always in a most excellent effect, or an intermission the same after were explained.



If the fever did not yield to blisters, it assumed a typhus character, & nothing answered so well in these cases as Dover's powder, repeated once every three hours aided by wine whey and the vapour bath, and continued until sweating was induced, which was kept up for some time, and if properly attended too the patient always recovered.

As co-operating means, I prescribed the Bark combined with some aromatic, Madeira wine, hot toddy, Brandy & water &c.

If these means failed & the pulse sinking, Venipunctures, frictions with Brandy & Cayenne pepper, or Opts. of Turpentine were used with the greatest possible advantage.

Hemorrhction was not attended in any case which came under my notice, nor did the pulse indicate any signs of inflammation.

Convalescence was marked by several extraordinary



Symptoms, some complained of a bitter taste in the mouth, others of nausea & a total want of appetite.

A weakness of the knees was a constant attendant during convalescence.

To remove these symptoms, I gave the Tincture of Bark, & Elixir of Nitric in frequent doses.

Great advantage was derived from Oysters, and a liberal use of Porter when they could be procured.



The